

1:19MJ2052

AFFIDAVIT

Affiant Paul D. Stroney Jr., having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and states:

Affiant Paul D. Stroney Jr., is an employee of the United States Department of Justice (DOJ), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), within the meaning of Section 878(a) of Title 21, United States Code, that is, an officer who is empowered by law to conduct investigations, make arrests, execute search warrants, and seize property in connection with violations of Title 18, United States Code and Title 21, United States Code. Affiant is a Special Agent (SA) for the DEA, and has been so employed since February 2012. Affiant has been assigned to the Cleveland District Office in Cleveland, Ohio, since February 2012.

TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

1. Affiant received specialized training at the DEA Training Academy in Quantico, Virginia, regarding the identification of narcotic controlled substances and the operation of drug trafficking organizations. Affiant has also been involved in the investigation of numerous individuals and organizations involved in the manufacturing, distribution, and use of controlled substances. As a Special Agent, Affiant has also worked in an undercover capacity for the purpose of

purchasing controlled substances, and has participated in the preparation of affidavits in support of numerous search and arrest warrants for violations of federal drug laws contained in Title 21, United States Code, as well as in the execution of the same. In addition, Affiant has on numerous occasions, made seizures of contraband, conveyances, currency, drug paraphernalia, and firearms possessed or used in relation to violations of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841.

Affiant has successfully conducted numerous investigations that have resulted in the arrest of numerous drug traffickers and the seizure of significant quantities of drugs and drug-related proceeds. Affiant has further conducted surveillance operations of drug traffickers, and has interviewed numerous persons personally involved in drug trafficking. Affiant has also supervised numerous confidential sources during controlled purchases of narcotics. Through this training and experience, Affiant has become familiar with, and has gained a thorough understanding of, the methods, manner, and means used by individuals engaged in the unlawful manufacturing, trafficking, and use of controlled substances.

BASIS OF INFORMATION

2. Except as otherwise noted, the information set forth in this Affidavit has been provided to your Affiant by agents and/or officers of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), or other law enforcement officers. Unless otherwise noted, whenever in this Affidavit your Affiant asserts that a statement was made, the information was provided by another law enforcement officer (who may have had either direct or hearsay knowledge of the statement) to whom Affiant has spoken or whose report Affiant has read and reviewed. Likewise, any information pertaining to vehicles and/or registrations, personal data on subjects and record checks has been obtained through the Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS), the State of Ohio or the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG) computer system, and other known public database computer systems, by members herein described.

3. Since the Affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing an arrest warrant, your Affiant has not included each and every fact known to her concerning this investigation. Your Affiant has set forth only the facts that he believes are necessary to establish the foundation for the issuance of the arrest warrant.

FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES REGARDING PROBABLE CAUSE

4. On February 26, 2019, while reviewing postal business records, USPIS Postal Inspector Myrick Dennis identified United States Postal Service (USPS) priority mail parcel number 9505 5156 4026 9057 2512 07 addressed to Betty Michaels at 987 East 78th Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44103 (hereafter referenced as "the parcel"). The return address was Mike Johnson, 813 Van Norstrand Court, Modesto, California. The parcel was a blue padded bubble mailer envelope weighing approximately 1 pound 3 ounces and measuring approximately 15" x 12" x 2". The parcel was mailed on February 26, 2019 from Modesto, California. U.S. Postal Inspector Dennis conducted commercial database queries and was unable to associate any individuals named Betty Michaels nor Mike Johnson associated with the delivery or return addresses, respectively.

5. On February 28, 2019, the parcel was placed into a lineup containing several blank parcels which emanated no narcotics odors. Narcotic detection canine "Ciga," handled by Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Detective M. Twombly, was allowed to examine the lineup. According to Detective Twombly, Ciga gave a positive alert on the parcel.

6. On February 28, 2019, at approximately 9:31 a.m., the Honorable U.S. Magistrate Judge David A. Ruiz, for the Northern

District of Ohio, signed a warrant authorizing search of the parcel. On the same date, U.S. Postal Inspector Dennis executed the search warrant and found the parcel contained multiple blue round pills sealed in plastic. The Cuyahoga County Regional Forensic Science Laboratory analyzed the blue pills and determined they were Fentanyl, a Schedule II controlled substance, with a net weight of 331.10 grams +/- 0.34 grams at a coverage probability of 95.45%.

7. On March 1, 2019, the DEA Cleveland District Office and U.S. Postal Inspection Service conducted a controlled delivery of the seized parcel. All controlled substances were removed from the parcel and replaced with inert items to provide a similar weight and shape as the removed pills. A tracking device was concealed inside the package, and the package was resealed.

8. On March 1, 2019, at approximately 11:12 a.m., investigators established surveillance at the delivery address (987 East 78th Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44103). At approximately 11:37 a.m., a U.S. Postal Inspector, posing as a typical mail carrier, delivered the parcel to 987 East 78th Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44103. An unknown black male accepted the package and took it inside the residence without opening it.

9. At approximately 12:05 p.m., a black Jeep, displaying Ohio temporary registration H103280, arrived and parked at 987

East 78th Street, Cleveland, Ohio. U.S. Postal Inspectors observed an individual, later identified as Rayshawn LIGON, exit the black Jeep and enter the residence. At approximately 12:07 p.m., LIGON walked out of the residence with the parcel and departed in the black Jeep. Investigators followed LIGON to McDonald's restaurant, 15110 St. Clair Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio. LIGON and a male child went inside the restaurant for several minutes, and then departed in the same black Jeep. As LIGON and the child exited the restaurant, TFO Charles Rowland positively identified LIGON. Investigators followed the black Jeep to a residence on Oriole Avenue in Euclid, Ohio. LIGON pulled into the driveway for a short time, and then departed the residence. Investigators later learned that LIGON dropped off the child at the residence. GPS tracking data for the parcel indicated it was still in the black Jeep when LIGON departed the Oriole Avenue residence. LIGON then stopped briefly at Upson Deli, 505 East 260th Street, Euclid, Ohio. Affiant observed LIGON walking into the Upson Deli and then exiting and walking back to the black Jeep.

10. At approximately 1:06 p.m., LIGON drove away from the Upson Deli. LIGON drove to and parked in the driveway of a residence on East 246th Street in Euclid, Ohio. LIGON carried the parcel to the front door and an adult female let LIGON into the residence. At approximately 1:16 p.m., U.S. Postal

Inspectors observed LIGON exiting the residence while carrying the opened parcel. LIGON entered the black Jeep, backed out of the driveway, and traveled south on East 246th Street. U.S. Postal Inspector Bryon Green activated his red and blue police lights and attempted to conduct a felony vehicle stop on the black Jeep. LIGON drove around Postal Inspector Green's vehicle at a high rate of speed and traveled eastbound on Shoreview Avenue. Inspector Green observed LIGON throw the opened parcel out of the window of the black Jeep. Inspector Green later recovered the parcel.

11. LIGON drove the black Jeep eastbound on Shoreview Avenue and attempted to turn north onto East 266th Street. However, LIGON apparently lost control and drove through a lawn and ran over a real estate sign. LIGON then abandoned the black Jeep and ran away on foot. Investigators were unable to locate LIGON.

12. The Euclid Police Department had the black Jeep towed from the scene. While conducting an inventory search of the vehicle, investigators located and seized various items, including an Ohio driver license and birth certificate issued to Rayshawn LIGON.

CONCLUSION

13. Special Agent Paul Stroney, Drug Enforcement Administration, being duly sworn according to law, deposes, and states that the facts stated in the foregoing Affidavit are true and correct to the best of his knowledge, information, and belief.

14. Based on your Affiant's training, experience and the facts set forth in this Affidavit, your Affiant believes that there is probable cause to believe that Rayshawn LIGON did knowingly and intentionally attempt to possess with the intent to distribute Fentanyl, a schedule II controlled substance, in violation of Title 21, U.S.C., Section 841(a)(1), and did conspire to possess with the intent to distribute Fentanyl in violation of Title 21, U.S.C, Section 846.



Paul D. Stroney Jr.
Special Agent
Drug Enforcement Administration

Sworn to via telephone after submission by reliable electronic means. F.R.C.P. 4.1; 41 (d)(3).



David A. Ruiz
United States Magistrate Judge
Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division



Mar 6, 2019

Date